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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 10579

SHAPE FOR INTAF

E.O. 11652: X-GDS-1

TAGS: PARM, GW, US

SUBJECT: MBFR: DEFENSE MINISTER LEBER'S POSITION ON
STATIONED/INDIGENOUS REDUCTION ISSUE

REF: A. BONN 10351; B. BONN 10305; C. BONN 10162

SUMMARY: EMBOFF'S JULY 24 CONVERSATIONS WITH SENIOR
DEFENSE MINISTRY OFFICIALS CONFIRM OUR JUDGMENT
(REF A) THAT MINISTER LEBER IS MOVING CAUTIOUSLY AWAY
FROM HIS EARLIER STRONG INSISTENCE THAT INITIAL MBFR
NEGOTIATIONS MUST ADDRESS REDUCTIONS OF BOTH STATIONED
AND INDIGENOUS FORCES. WHILE A DEFINITIVE FRG
POSITION HAS NOT YET BEEN FIXED, THERE WOULD SEEM TO
BE A GOOD CHANCE THAT CURRENTLY INTENSIVE INTER-
MINISTERIAL TALKS WILL LEAD GERMANS TO FAVOR TWO
PHASED MBFR NEGOTIATIONS, WITH THE INITIAL PHASE
TREATING STATIONED FORCE REDUCTIONS (AS WELL AS
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CONSTRAINTS) AND REACHING BINDING AGREEMENT TO HOLD

A SECOND NEGOTIATION PHASE AFFECTING INDIGENOUS FORCE REDUCTIONS. OUR SOURCES EMPHASIZED IMPORTANCE LEBER ATTACHED TO DIRECT CONTACT WITH SECDEF ON THIS AND OTHER SUBJECTS. END SUMMARY.

1. SINCE HIS RETURN FROM WASHINGTON, DEFMIN LEBER HAS MADE A NUMBER OF PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON THE MBFR STATIONED/INDIGENOUS REDUCTION ISSUE. BESIDES HIS REMARKS REPORTED REFS A AND B, LEBER TOLD NORTH GERMAN RADIO JULY 21 THAT BOTH ELEMENTS MUST BE INCLUDED BUT "THE FIRST STEP WOULD BE FOR THE FOREIGN TROOPS TO BE FULLY CONSIDERED IN THE NEGOTIATIONS"; AFTERWARDS, HE SAID, THERE WOULD BE A DISCUSSION "AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME AS TO HOW THE INDIGENOUS TROOPS COULD BE INCLUDED IN AN AGREEMENT OF THIS KIND OR IN TALKS OF THIS KIND". IN AN INTERVIEW PUBLISHED IN THE JULY 23 DIE WELT, LEBER SAID HE COULD NOT CONFIRM A FULL SUCCESS OF MBFR NEGOTIATIONS "UNLESS FINALLY STATIONED AS WELL AS INDIGENOUS FORCES WERE REDUCED". LEBER REITERATED THAT IT WOULD BE LOGICAL TO BEGIN WITH REDUCTIONS "IN THE FORCES OF THE TWO SUPER-POWERS BECAUSE IT WOULD PRESUMABLY BE EASIER TO DEVELOP A FORMULA". HE ADDED: QUOTE IN THE COURSE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS ONE MUST PROBABLY THEREFORE SEEK CLARITY ON WHAT HAPPENS WITH FOREIGN FORCES WHILE IN AN APPROPRIATE INTERVAL THEREAFTER THE INDIGENOUS FORCES MUST BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION. UNQUOTE

2. WHILE THE MINISTER'S SOMEWHAT ELLIPTICAL PUBLIC COMMENTS DONOT CLARIFY HIS POSITION AND WHILE THE PRESS IN ANY CASE SUBSTANTIALLY MISSED THE NUANCES, DEFMIN SOURCES HAVE ACKNOWLEDGED TO EMBOFF THAT LEBER'S INTERVIEWS HAVE CONVEYED THE OVERWHELMING IMPRESSION THROUGH THE GERMAN PRESS THAT MBFR WILL DEAL FIRST WITH STATIONED FORCES AND ONLY THEREAFTER (BUT DEFINITELY) WITH INDIGENOUS FORCE REDUCTIONS. BOTH POLICY PLANNING STAFF CHIEF WIECK AND MILITARY POLICY AND PLANS CHIEF TREBESCH TELL US THEY THINK LEBER'S VAGUE PRESS STATEMENTS OF THE LAST FEW DAYS SHOULD SUFFICE IN INFORMING THE PUBLIC AND THAT IT NOW WILL

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BE POSSIBLE TO DEVELOP WITHIN THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT AND THE ALLIANCE ACCEPTABLE POSITIONS FOR THE FORTH-COMING NEGOTIATIONS. WIECK, WHO ACCOMPANIED LEBER TO WASHINGTON, SAID THE MINISTER'S LENGTHY TALKS WITH SECDEF HAD BEEN PARTICULARLY USEFUL IN THIS CONNECTION IN PROVIDING A BASIS OF CONFIDENCE AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF EACH OTHER'S PROBLEMS ON MBFR AS WELL AS OTHER TOPICS. WIECK AND TREBESCH (AS WELL

AS FONOFF SOURCES) TELL US INTENSIVE INTER-MINISTERIAL CONSULTATIONS ARE PRESENTLY GOING ON WITHIN THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT TO DEFINE A COMMON POSITION ON THE STATIONED/INDIGENOUS ISSUE; TO THAT END, WE ARE TOLD THAT LEBER AND SENIOR DEFMIN OFFICIALS WILL MEET JULY 25 WITH DISARMAMENT COMMISSIONER ROTH.

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3. AS TO LEBER'S SPECIFIC POSITION, BOTH TREBESCH AND WIECK SAID LEBER'S MEETINGS IN WASHINGTON HAD BROUGHT HOME TO HIM CLEARLY THE SERIOUS PRESSURES CURRENTLY EMANATING FROM THE CONGRESS ON THE PROBLEM OF US TROOP PRESENCE IN EUROPE. ACCORDINGLY, SAID TREBESCH, "LEBER UNDERSTOOD HE COULD NOT INSIST TOO RIGIDLY ON INCLUDING INDIGENOUS FORCE REDUCTIONS IN A FIRST NEGOTIATION PHASE". WHILE LEBER HAS NOT YET SETTLED ON AN EXACT FORMULA, WIECK TOLD EMBOFF THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO STUDY CAREFULLY THE "EXAMPLE REPEAT

EXAMPLE" LEBER CITED IN WASHINGTON.

4. ACCORDING TO LEBER'S "EXAMPLE", STATIONED FORCE REDUCTIONS COULD BE DISCUSSED IN 1974 WITH A "PROVISIONAL AGREEMENT" BEING CONCLUDED BY THE END OF 1974 BUT WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STATIONED FORCE REDUCTIONS ONLY BEGINNING AFTER JANUARY 1, 1976. IN THE MEANTIME, INDIGENOUS FORCE REDUCTIONS COULD BE
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DISCUSSED IN 1975, AFTER CONCLUSION OF A STATIONED FORCE REDUCTION AGREEMENT, AND THESE INDIGENOUS FORCE TALKS COULD BE CONCLUDED IN THE YEAR 1975; BUT IMPLEMENTATION OF INDIGENOUS FORCE REDUCTIONS COULD BE DELAYED FOR "ONE OR AS MANY AS FOUR YEARS". WIECK SAID LEBER BELIEVED THIS TYPE OF APPROACH WOULD SERVE THE IMPORTANT PURPOSE OF MAINTAINING A MINIMUM LEVEL OF EUROPEAN ALLIED FORCES DURING THIS NEGOTIATING PERIOD. WIECK SAID THE GERMANS GAINED THE IMPRESSION IN WASHINGTON THAT US OFFICIALS HAD "UNDERSTANDING FOR OUR POSITION AND THAT THIS WOULD BE REFLECTED IN THE FORTHCOMING US MBFR PROPOSALS". WIECK ADDED LEBER'S UNDERSTANDING THAT, GIVEN CURRENT US CONGRESSIONAL PRESSURES, IT WOULD BE PRUDENT TO AVOID EXTENSIVE PUBLIC COMMENTS ON PROSPECTS FOR THE SECOND NEGOTIATIONS OVER INDIGENOUS FORCE CUTS.

5. EMBOFF ASKED WIECK WHETHER IT WOULD BE NECESSARY, PURSUANT TO ABOVE "EXAMPLE", TO COMPLETE INDIGENOUS FORCE NEGOTIATIONS BEFORE IMPLEMENTATION OF STATIONED FORCE REDUCTIONS. WIECK SAID LEBER HAD NOT ADDRESSED THAT SUBJECT AND THAT SOME TYPE OF CONNECTION BETWEEN STATIONED AND INDIGENOUS FORCE CUT NEGOTIATIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE FOUND. PURSUANT TO LEBER'S TALKS IN WASHINGTON, HE SAID THE DEFENSE MINISTER WOULD AWAIT US SUGGESTIONS ON THIS LINKAGE. AS US OFFICIALS NOW HAVE CLEAR VIEW OF LEBER'S THINKING ON THIS TOPIC, WIECK SAID THE MINISTER PREFERRED TO AWAIT US SUGGESTIONS.

6. EMBOFF SAID HE HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT THE GRAVEMEN OF LEBER'S CURRENT POSITION WAS AS FOLLOWS: STATIONED FORCE NEGOTIATIONS COULD BE COMPLETED BEFORE BEGINNING OF INDIGENOUS FORCE NEGOTIATIONS, BUT INITIAL STATIONED FORCE NEGOTIATIONS MUST ALSO RESULT IN EAST/WEST AGREEMENT THAT NEGOTIATIONS ON INDIGENOUS FORCE REDUCTIONS MUST FOLLOW THEREAFTER. WIECK REPLIED THAT THIS COULD BE A POSSIBLE OUTCOME BUT THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER TO AWAIT US SUGGESTIONS ON EXACT LINKAGE. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH TREBESCH,

HOWEVER, THE LATTER EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT LEBER

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"WOULD BE ABLE TO LIVE WITH" THE VAN DER STOEL APPROACH. TREBESCH SAID THE FIRST AGREEMENT ON STATIONED FORCE REDUCTIONS MUST "IN SOME BINDING WAY ENVISAGE REDUCTION IN INDIGENOUS FORCES". TREBESCH SAID HE THOUGHT LEBER WOULD BE ABLE TO ACCEPT AN INTEGRAL ALLIANCE PACKAGE COMPRISING STATIONED AND INDIGENOUS FORCES, WITH THE FIRST NEGOTIATION PHASE AFFECTING STATIONED FORCE REDUCTIONS AND CONSTRAINTS AND ALSO ENTAILING A BINDING EAST/WEST AGREEMENT TO COMMENCE A SECOND NEGOTIATING PHASE DESIGNED ALSO TO BRING ABOUT REDUCTIONS IN INDIGENOUS FORCES. TREBESCH ADDED THAT, IN EVENTUALLY AGREEING TO SUCH AN APPROACH, HOPEFULLY IN THE NEXT WEEKS, LEBER WOULD DOUBTLESS EXPECT IN CONSIDERATION A BINDING ALLIANCE PROMISE TO SEEK EAST/WEST AGREEMENT IN MBFR-I NEGOTIATIONS TO THE EFFECT THAT INDIGENOUS FORCE REDUCTIONS WOULD BE AFFECTED IN SUBSEQUENT MBFR-II NEGOTIATIONS.

7. IN RESPONSE TO EMBOFF'S QUESTION, BOTH WIECK AND TREBESCH ACKNOWLEDGED LEBER'S COMMENTS TO FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE REPORTER ADELBERT WEINSTEIN TO THE EFFECT THAT ALL CURRENT MBFR PLANNING IS RATHER HYPOTHETICAL GIVEN INEVITABLE SURPRISES FORTHCOMING FROM SOVIETS ONCE ACTUAL NEGOTIATIONS BEGIN. GIVEN THIS PROSPECT, WIECK SAID LEBER FAVORS OVERALL W-ESTERN FRAMEWORK

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WHICH "PERMITS" BOTH STATIONED AND INDIGENOUS FORCE CUTS BUT WHICH ACCORDS WEST SUFFICIENT FLEXIBILITY IN TIMING OF THOSE REDUCTIONS. SINCE SOVIET FORCES REPRESENT SUBSTANTIALLY GREATER PERCENTAGE OF WARSAW PACT FORCES THAN PERTAINS IN RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN US AND NATO FORCES, FRG IS CONCERNED THAT OVERLY EXCLUSIVE EMPHASIS ON STATIONED FORCE CUTS COULD EVENTUALLY "CHANGE THE CHARACTER OF US CONTRIBUTION TO ALLIANCE". ON THE OTHER HAND, WHILE TREBESCH ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SOVIETS WOULD PUSH ALSO FOR INDIGENOUS (I.E. BUNDESWEHR) REDUCTIONS, HE SAID ON PERSONAL BASIS THAT THE WEST COULD PERHAPS FINESSE THIS QUESTION WITH SOVIETS THROUGH SOME TYPE OF NON-CIRCUMVENTION APPROACH. TREBESCH SAID THE WEST HAD RESISTED FBS QUESTION IN SALT AND WAS NOW MAKING USE OF NON-CIRCUMVENTION APPROACH; HE SAID THIS MIGHT PROVIDE CONCEPTUAL APPROACH IN MBFR AS WELL.

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8. BOTH WIECK AND TREBESCH EMPHASIZED LEBER'S APPRECIATION FOR FULL BRIEFING USG PROVIDED ON EAST/WEST FORCE BALANCE. OUR SOURCES SAID THE MINISTER APPRECIATED CURRENT CONGRESSIONAL PREFERENCES FOR SMALLER CONVENTIONAL FORCE LEVELS TO IMPLEMENT TRIP-WIRE APPROACH IN EUROPE. THEY SAID SEVERAL GERMAN CABINET MINISTERS HAD RECENTLY COMMENTED TO LEBER, FOLLOWING AFCENT BRIEFING TO FRG CABINET, THAT THERE WAS NO POINT IN CURRENT LARGE GERMAN DEFENSE EXPENDITURES IN VIEW OF UNFAVORABLE EAST/WEST BALANCE. LEBER WAS DETERMINED TO RESIST SUCH INTERNAL GERMAN PRESSURES AND TO ARGUE FOR CREDIBILITY OF CURRENT NATO STRATEGY; TO THAT END, LEBER, SCHEEL AND CHANCELLOR BRANDT (BONN 10481) HAD IN THE LAST WEEK EMPHASIZED IMPORTANCE OF NATO ALLIANCE

AND US FIDELITY TO ITS COMMITMENTS. WIECK ADDED,
HOWEVER, THAT PARTICULARLY WITH MBFR NEGOTIATIONS
JUST AHEAD,IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR THE WEST TO PROCEED
ON THE BASIS OF COMMONLY AGREED FIGURES. TO THAT END
HE SAID FRG LOOKING FORWARD TO FORTHCOMING US PAPER
ON MBFR.
HILLENBRAND

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